COMIC SHOP NEWS™

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Genesis ™ & ©1997 DC Comics, ARR.

The Source is the Source of Course

The DC Universe has comic books that deal with old gods of Greek, Roman, and Norse mythology, as well as comic books dealing with New Gods from Kirby's Fourth World. In addition, it is populated by amazingly powerful heroes and villains who, in eras past, would have been regarded as virtual gods of their own. But where did the power for these beings come from?

John Byrne answers that question in a major four-week crossover event debuting from DC in August. *Genesis*, a book that Byrne said is less of a change than an explanation of "this is way it always has been."

"It all started with *Action #600*," Byrne said, "when I knocked over the first domino without realizing that I was doing so. In that book, I said that a small nodule of energy was thrown out by the disruption of the original world of the gods and that had created the potential of the Greek gods. As I moved along—especially as I came into possession of the Fourth World characters—I realized that that event was bigger than I had originally seen it in my mind, and that it was not a nodule of energy, it was in fact an entire wave, a bubble, a blister—whatever—that had expanded in all directions through all of space.

"A friend of mine that I was talking to about this—Paul Givney, after whom I named the Torch of Liberty—asked, 'What would happen when this wave reached the ultimate extent of the universe? Would it keep going, or would it bounce back?' I thought about it; if it bounced back, then in its weakened state after it had spent most of its energy, it would pass over all those worlds again. On the first pass, it creates the gods; on the second pass, it creates demigods—superheroes and supervillains. Actually, it doesn't create them, it creates *the potential*—it leaves the energy reserves."

From there, the idea that eventually became *Genesis* was created. But Byrne didn't originally envision this as a major crossover event; instead, he initially saw it as a storyline that would involve *Jack Kirby's Fourth World and Wonder Woman*, Byrne's two DC titles. "I kicked it around as a possible story in *Fourth World*," Byrne said, "and Paul Kupperberg, the editor, said 'No, that's really big. Let's pitch it as a crossover.' And so it was his idea to turn it into a cross-company crossover; he built it into a little bit more than what I had started with, and the final thing is *Genesis*. We tossed it out there as a 'come play if you want to' kind of crossover. " And quite a few creators did "come play"; almost two dozen DC titles will be involved with *Genesis*, and each of these books will feature a special cover design to make it clear to fans that they are a part of the *Genesis* event. None of these titles are required reading for fans who want to enjoy *Genesis*, but each book will enhance the miniseries by developing the effects of this wave's passage on a variety of heroes and villains.

"It wasn't difficult at all to sell DC on a crossover project–they want to do a crossover project every year. The main difficulty was convincing them to take that one over any other one that was percolating or in the works." The concept of a series that linked Kirby's Fourth World, the ancient Greek and Roman gods, and the superheroes of the modern DC Universe was too appealing to pass up, and *Genesis* was born.

"The best thing about *Genesis* is that, even though it's this massive event, it doesn't really change anything," Byrne pointed out.

"It's not saying, 'Now, from this point on, it's this way'; instead it's saying, 'No, this is the way it always has been.' We're kind of back-referencing this, making it backwards compatible with the DC Universe."

In the weekly series, a number of DC heroes and villains' powers are affected as the Source wave passes the Earth again. Some beings are given new powers, some powers are enhanced, and some lose part or all of their powers as a result of the wave's passing. Darkseid, who is more aware of what is happening than many other heroes or villains, decides to seize control of the wave's energies for himself; to stop the DC heroes from interfering with him, he sends his forces to Earth to keep the heroes too busy to confront Darkseid.

Was it difficult for Byrne, who has traditionally preferred to illustrate his own stories, to pass up the art honors on this series? "Not at all. The minute I sat down and said, 'I'm going to have to draw about 130,000 different characters,' there was no problem passing on the art on that one! Since I didn't know who was going to illustrate the book as I began it, I wrote it full script. Then I told them that I didn't want to have to look at it until it was finished; I said, 'If the art comes in when I'm writing issue three and I see issue one and it sucks, I'm not going to be able to write issue four.'

"Luckily, we got Ron Wagner, whose work I was unfamiliar with at the time; he's inked by Joe Rubinstein, who appears to be using a very slick line that I've never seen him use before. I swear that the combination looks like Garcia-Lopez; it's gorgeous, and it's going to be the best-looking book to come out this summer."

Byrne is happy that *Genesis* not only tells a strong story, but also enables him to "make Jack Kirby the creator, in effect, of the DC Universe. Bringing Kirby's Fourth World into the DC Universe was a logical extrapolation. For as long as I've done anything in the DC Universe, I've involved Kirby's creations—you saw that I involved Darkseid in *Superman* when I was doing Superman.

"If they *are* the New Gods, if this is *the Source*, then everything must fit together. Kirby linked it from the beginning; after all, Darkseid first appeared in *Jimmy Olsen* when Jack was doing it—sure, it was a tiny panel colored wrong, but nevertheless, there he was! It only seems a logical thing that, if all these characters in the DC Universe are touching on different aspects of one another all the time, then naturally New Gods would be involved in this too. The only trick is to make sure that they don't become so mundane that Darkseid is stopping by coffee bars for a cappuccino..."

Byrne feels strongly that the very name of this energy source indicates its significance in the DC Universe. "The Source—why is it called the Source if it isn't *The Source*? So let's assume, if we have something that's called the source, that it is the Source.

"The Source outranks *everything*, as far as I'm concerned. What is the Source? I don't know. I solved that problem in my chapter, when characters go into the Source, by leaving it as a blank background; there's nothing to see, nothing to comprehend. In fact, I imagine if you went in there, the Source would be literally nothing: your brain wouldn't be able to deal with it.

"One of the fun things that I'm doing right now is the *Wonder Woman* tie-in to *Genesis*. In that book, I have Zeus and Herakles talking about the Source, and they know about it—they call it *the Source*, they know what it is. It was fun to establish that the Source goes back to their time."

Byrne is aware that this will shake up some people's view of the DC Universe—and he also acknowledges that it ventures upon the metaphysical, especially since some DC titles, like *The Spectre*, deal with issues of religion from time to time. "I've had people ask me 'how does the Source fit in in relation to Jehovah, who the Spectre works for?' I have one of two answers of that, depending on whom I'm talking to: I say, 'Well, Jehovah created the Source or the Source created Jehovah—take your pick,' or I say, 'To the best of my knowledge, John Ostrander is not writing the Fifth Gospel.' The minute Jehovah appears in a DC comic, he becomes a fictional character in the context of that book, and a lot of people have trouble wrapping their brains around that. 'Well, this is God,' they say. Well, not really, okay? At that time, he's God in a comic book universe that also has Greek gods and Roman gods and New Gods.

"I'm going for the same mythological approach as Kirby did. One of the important things that I try to emphasize here is that the Judeo-Christian epoch has kind of compressed the way people think about gods; we end up with Yawheh, or Jehovah, as this one god who does everything. That's not the way that our ancestors thought about gods. The ancient gods were superheroes of their day. When people say to me, 'Who worships the New Gods?' I say, 'They don't need to be worshiped.' They might be more powerful if they were worshiped; in fact, that's an element that I'm going to be addressing in an upcoming story, explaining how their came to be a greek and a Roman pantheon as separate entities—it had to do with the worshipping of these beings by two separate groups of people. But you don't need Herakles? There didn't have to be a First Church of Herakles in order for Herakles to be a god. It's a concept that society has very much lost as Jehovah has become a bigger being; the concept of the gods has become more narrow, and I'm trying to explore some of that, to say there's more to this; these are gods in the old-fashioned mythological sense."

While the miniseries comes to an end in late August, effects of this series will be felt for some time to come—particularly in the books that Byrne writes and illustrates. "There will be ramifications throughout *Jack Kirby's Fourth World*—a major death happens as a result of *Genesis*. That will have ramifications that go on—well, this guy will be dead as long as I'm on the book, so it will have ramifications as long as I'm on the book. That death will cause other characters to have to assume different roles, as a result of which they will have to change for as long as I'm on the book.

"Some of it will also flow over into *Wonder Woman*. I was saying to Paul Kupperberg a few weeks ago that I'm starting to realize that because I have the Graeco-Roman gods in *Wonder Woman* and the New Gods in *Fourth World*, that mythological element of it will become the same story running through both books. In a way, these books will become a biweekly book featuring different parts of the same story."

Genesis, a four-issue weekly series priced at $1.95 per issue, is scheduled to debut on August 6th. In addition, the following tie-in books will appear during the month:

August 6th: *Green Lantern #91, Power of Shazam! #31, Starman #35, Steel #43*, and *Superman: The Man of Steel #72*.

August 13th: *Azrael #34, Batman #547, Impulse #30, Jack Kirby's Fourth World #8, Sovereign Seven #27, Supergirl #14*, and *Superman #128*.

August 20th: *Adventures of Superman #551, Aquaman #37, Lobo #44, Resurrection Man #6*, and *Young Heroes In Love #5*.

August 27th: *Legion of Super-Heroes #97, Robin #46, Spectre #58, Superboy & The Ravers #14, Teen Titans #13, Wonder Woman #126*, and *Xero #6*.

Additionally, DC is reprinting the entire Jack Kirby run of *New Gods* in a 304-page black and white trade paperback edition; this will allow readers to enjoy those early stories of Darkseid, Orion, Highfather, and the other New Gods, as well as seeing how the Source developed in that series. *Jack Kirby's New Gods*, an $11.95 trade paperback, is scheduled for August 20th release.

In September, several books will also deal with the *Genesis* aftermath and/or the series' physical or mental effects on DC heroes, including *Power of Shazam! #32* (September 4th), *Jack Kirby's Fourth World #9* (September 10th), *Spectre #59* (September 24th), *Superboy & the Ravers #15* (September 24th), and *Wonder Woman #127* (September 24th).

by Cliff Biggers

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CSNSIDER

Joe R. Lansdale and *Sam Glanzman*'s graphic novel ***Red Range***, described by publisher *Rick Klaw* as "a Western with dinosaurs and lost worlds," should appear next summer from Mojo Press... Bad news for Billi fans: Mojo has cancelled its ***Billi 99*** trade paperback; it will be published sometime down the line... Rick also reports that Mojo is "in the final negotiations to reprint one of America's leading crime comics"...

Acclaim and GoldenBooks have reached an agreement with Playmates to produce a series of ***Turok, Dinosaur Hunter*** action figures and other toys...

Bob Schreck, previously associated with Comico and Dark Horse Comics, has announced plans to launch is own comic company. No information about titles is available at this time...

Kevin Smith phoned in to Howard Stern on June 24th to talk about ***Superman Lives;*** he mentioned in the phone call that he had heard that the new script was very strongly based on his storyline, but without any of his dialogue. In unrelated but equally interesting news, Smith is talking with DC about writing something for them, although no one's saying what yet...

Gil Kane has announced that he will not be illustrating the ***WetWorks/Vampirella*** book after all...

Ben Raab, who discussed a variety of X-related projects in *CSN #525*, dropped us a note to say "I just found out that the ***X-Man Bookshelf*** will not be a Halloween special...it's been moved to the 2nd week of November for scheduling reasons." What's a couple of extra weeks between friends?...

Stephen Blue's superb miniseries ***Awakening*** is now on the Image schedule for October—and if you thought his art in ***Red River*** was stunning, just wait until you see his latest work!...

Mike Carlin says that DC has several books in the works to commemorate Superman's sixtieth anniversary, including a book illustrated by *Alex Ross* (who is also talking to DC about doing other books for Batman's, Wonder Woman's, and Captain Marvel's sixtieth anniversaries as well). At DragonCon, his announcement that "the Superman new costume and powers storyline will be resolved for the sixtieth anniversary" met with overwhelming applause, although Carlin followed it up with the joking comment, "Hey, I didn't say how it would be resolved!"...

David Yurkovich's offbeat superhero title ***Threshold*** will, at long last, become an ongoing series from Sleeping Giant Comics this fall; look for the first issue in November...

Jason Pearson will be doing a second ***Body Bags*** series for Dark Horse for 1998; for those who don't want to wait that long, though, a Pearson cover and a Body Bags story will appear in the ***Dark Horse Presents Annual*** scheduled for September release.

Dan Brereton's ***Nocturnals*** return in ***Dark Horse Presents #125*** in October...

Mike Allred is working on a new Vertigo title, ***Big World;*** no release date is thus far set for this oversized book from the ***Madman*** maestro...

Mark Waid says that ***JLA Year One*** is now scheduled for November release; the series will focus, as the name implies, on the first meetings of the various heroes. "I'm having a lot of fun with the Martian Manhunter," Waid said. "No one knows exactly what his powers are and he doesn't really see any reason to tell them, so every time he displays a new power, they're saying 'I didn't know you could do that too!'" Waid also said that no schedule date has been set for ***Kingdom,*** although he quipped, "It'll definitely be out before the events portrayed in ***Kingdom Come*** come to pass." He also said that the development of ***Kingdom*** will strongly indicate that the events of ***Kingdom Come*** are more than likely the future of DC, rather than a possible future...

Joe Quesada and *Jimmy Palmiotti* said that the long-awaited ***Ash Action Figure*** should be in comic shops any week now; the production run was held at a very low 15,000, and Palmiotti said, "Believe me, these figures are seriously underordered, but we didn't produce any extras. We turned down orders from several big toy dealers and some chains, even though these orders could have more than doubled the run...because we wanted these to be available only in comic shops." Two figures out of every case will be variants with translucent hair and eyes that light up...

John Byrne's prequel-or-sorts to ***Batman/Captain America*** will involve Superman and Batman. "It's as close as I can come to doing a sequel to ***Batman/Captain America*** without having to get permission from Marvel for anything," he said...

Nat Gertler sent a correction to ***CSN:*** *Jeff Smith* won a National Cartoonist's Society Division Award, not a Reuben, earlier this year. "The Reuben is specifically Cartoonist Of The Year (this year, it was *Sergio [Aragones]*, which was quite a piece of news in itself)," Gertler wrote...

Alex Ross and Steve Darnall's Vertigo series ***Uncle Sam*** series will debut in November, with the second and third issues following every six weeks...

Due to *George Pérez*'s heavy work schedule, Event Comics won't be releasing the second issue of ***Crimson Plague*** until late October or early November...

Paul Dini and *Alex Ross* are talking about doing a book in a modified animated style, but it's too early to say when fans will get a chance to see it...

Mike Carlin confirmed that *Karl Kesel* and *Tom Grummett* will be returning to ***Superboy*** in the near future; he assured fans that *Ron Marz*, who had been writing ***Superboy*** recently, would "still be busy on other projects at DC"...

TNT has announced that they will pick up ***Babylon 5*** for a fifth season; the series will debut on the cable channel beginning in January...

Rich Johnston reports that negotiations are underway for the sale of Panini, the sticker company acquired by Marvel a couple of years ago, to Fleetway, the prominent UK publisher...

The Life Story of the Flash, Iris West's biography of Barry Allen, has been recreated by *Mark Waid, Brian Augustyn, Gil Kane,* and *Tom Palmer;* the 96-page hardcover book will be released in late October...

Dreamsmith Studios and its publisher *Ben Capozzi* will enter the comics market this fall with a 64-page no-ads publication called, simply enough, ***Book.*** Each issue will feature new installments of three different series: ***Norse Saga***, a grim heroic fantasy tale; ***Chimera***, a dragon-fighting fantasy series that Capozzi describes as "The ***Generation X*** or ***Gen13*** of the Dreamsmith Studios Universe—it's fun and the most openly comical of the stories"; and ***Anna***, focusing on a heroic sword-wielding woman on a mission. Book will feature black and white interiors as well as black and white covers...

Tia Carrere will appear as Shi on a photo cover for an upcoming issue of the series. "We wanted something really big to kick off the Shi Revolution," *Shi* creator *Bill Tucci* said. "We knew that Tia was a fan of the series, so it was only natural that we ask her to be there at the beginning. I've always pictured Tia as Shi, so I was thrilled when she agreed to support Crusade..."

Neil Gaiman collectors will want to contact their local comic retailer to reserve a copy of ***On Cats & Dogs: Two Tales By Neil Gaiman.*** The $10 booklet, limited to 5000 copies, features one previously unpublished Gaiman story and one rarely-seen Lovecraftian pastiche; a portion of the cover price of each book will be donated to the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, a group Gaiman has actively supported for years...

Bone creator *Jeff Smith* is supplying the variant cover for ***Pakkins' Land: Quest for Kings #1***, an August release from Caliber. "When we talked with *Corey Sherman* [***Pakkins' Land*** creator] about doing a variant cover, the first name that came us was *Jeff Smith*—and luckily, Jeff enjoyed the first run of ***Pakkins' Land*** and signed on board," Caliber editor *James Pruett* said...

Antarctic Press is offering a ***Warrior Nun Areala "Animated" Action Figure*** in November. This re-designed figure will feature an interpretation of Areala based on Antarctic's ***Warrior Nun Areala Animation Video***. The figure will have five-joint articulation, a sword accessory with gemstone jewel, and a redesigned soft plastic outfit. Antarctic also announced plans to offer a new action figure every sixty to ninety days; upcoming figures include Cheetah from ***Gold Digger*** and ***Warrior Nun Areala: Rituals...***

Shotgun Mary returns in October in a new full-color book by *Miljenko Horvatic* with fully painted comic art by *Esad Ribic*, who supplied the cover art for ***The Crimson Nun...***

Elvira will meet Dracula's Daughter in ***Elvira #55***, a late October release holiday-themed issue that will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the publication of *Bram Stoker's* ***Dracula.*** "Dracula's daughter Vladia—all she wants for Christmas is—no, not her two front teeth—but an authentic Elvira costume," Elvira editor *Richard Howell* said...

Tony Isabella reports that he and *Eddy Newell* will contribute a new ten-page Black Lightning story, "Twas the Night Before Kwanzaa," to this year's ***DC Universe Holiday Bash...***

At a recent autographing, *Neil Gaiman* revealed that his next novel, tentatively titled ***Time in the Smoke,*** will deal with provocative 17th century nobleman and Restoration poet *John Wilmot*. Gaiman also reports that he and *Roger Avery*, who was initially set to direct Sandman before Warner fired him, plan to cowrite a faithful adaptation of the Anglo-Saxon epic Beowulf. Work on the ***Sandman*** film continues; it's on its eighth script rewrite, and Gaiman has little involvement with the movie...

Will one of Dark Horse's manga heroes be facing off against Predators sometime next year? Could be!...

Stuart Moore, editor of DC's Helix line, reports that *Dane Gibbons* and *Angus McKie* are working on a computer-comics project for the Helix line. "The book is called ***The Dome: Ground Zero*** and will be out from DC/Helix in (hopefully) December. It's a sort of big action/disaster movie (you know, one of the good ones, with characterization, striking visuals, and good pacing) about an alien artifact in the Pacific Ocean that's accidentally activated, and begins transforming the Earth into a duplicate of its homeworld. Angus's art samples are amazing; a couple of them have appeared in the ***'97 Direct Currents Special*** and in a recent Helix house ad (the one that stretched across the top of a two-page spread), and the most recent work he's doing is even better. Angus is particularly concerned with the human figures, as that's the part of a lot of computer-generated comics that tends to look really artificial"...

Sal Velluto reports that ***Bloodshot #s 7 & 8*** will feature "the most vicious battle between superheroes in comic book history" as Bloodshot and X-O Manowar face off against each other—but neither one will attempt to bite the other's ear off, we're assured...

A ***Superboy/Robin/Impulse*** book is in the planning stages at DC, but it isn't so far along that it's actually on schedule yet.

COMIC SHOP NEWS

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Editorial Office:
2770 Carillon Crossing
Marietta, GA 30066
fax (770) 973-6949
cliffbig@netdepot.com

Business Office:
1266 W. Paces Ferry Rd. #445
Atlanta, GA 30327
(404) 261-8101
wardo@netdepot.com

Visit our WWW site at:
http://www.dreamsville.com/CSN/

Editors
Cliff Biggers & Ward Batty

Publisher
Comic Shop News, Inc.

Dax the Ticket!

So far in the pages of ***Supreme, Alan Moore*** has created a continuity that stretches back for generations and ahead for generations to come, offering readers a new universe that seems inspired by the best of the DC Silver Age... but what can he do to wrap up his first year "on the job"? Well, howsabout offering fans one of those wonderful eighty-page giants that every Silver Age fan loves so?

Well, that's what Moore and Awesome Comics have done—almost. Actually, they've created two forty-page comics that, when combined, form an eighty-page giant. But other than the absence of the square binding and the splitting of the book into two segments, everything else fans might remember is here: a "Tales of the Supremacy" story, a glimpse into the Supreme comic strip of the 1950's, a cover gallery, a map of the Citadel Supreme, a Rogue's Gallery, and more of the fun stuff that made those eighty-page giants of the 60's such a treat. There's also a lead story that no Supreme reader will want to miss: "The Return of Darius Dax," a tale that brings back one of Supreme's most diabolical foes, offered in two installments in ***Supreme #s 52A & 52B***. Each 40-page book is priced at $3.50; sure, it's a little more than the 1960 80 page giant's 25¢ cover price, but you gotta allow for inflation!... ***Supreme #s 52A & 52B*** are both scheduled for August release.

QUICKSHOTS

You Say You Want a Revelation

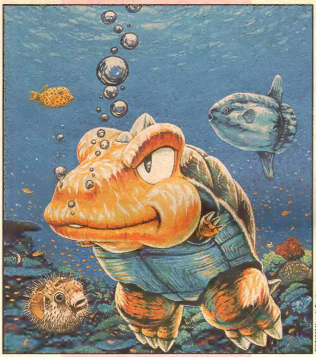
Helena Seleski. And now it's occurring: Solar, the being with the powers of a god, is returning to Earth in ***Revelations,*** a new 48-page special written by *Jim Krueger* and illustrated by *Patrick Zircher*. But is this the Solar that Valiant Comics fans have come to know, or is it someone—or something—much more dangerous?

Revelations will introduce an all-new interpretation of Solar into the Valiant Universe; the events of this one-shot will pave the way for the ***Solar, Man of the Atom*** limited series that debuts from Acclaim in August. And believe us—when Acclaim describes ***Revelations*** as an "Event" issue, they really mean it!

Revelations, a 48-page comic priced at $3.95, is scheduled for July release.

DC's Gon Crazy!

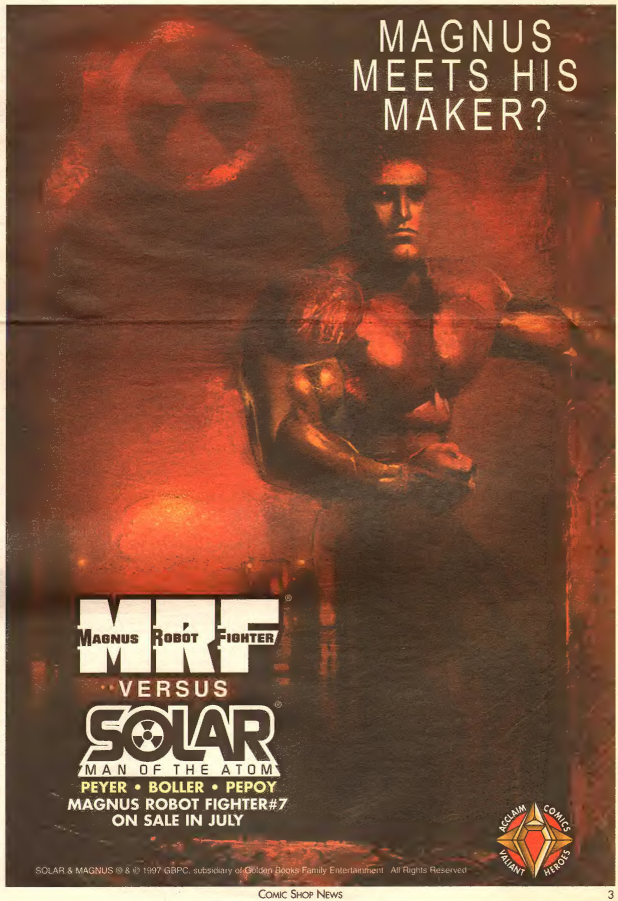
This is the summer of the dinosaurs. ***The Lost World*** has done dinomite box office at the theaters, you can't make it down the toy aisles without tripping over plastic T Rexes, and every television commercial seems to feature one ***Lost World*** tie-in or another. Yep, dinosaurs are big—but some dinosaurs can be itty-bitty, too.



Gon Swimmin', the fifth volume of stories starring the world's tiniest T Rex in a series of fascinating wordless adventures, compiles the latest assortment of stories by acclaimed Japanese artist *Masashi Tanaka* in a 160-page trade paperback in the Paradox Compact Format. In "Gon Becomes a Turtle," the mini-dino crawls into a turtle shell and makes some new friends; in "Gon's Journey Into the Desert," Gon leads a group of animals to safety in an arid wilderness; and "Gon and His Posse," the little guy befriends a group of wild orphan lions. ***Gon Swimmin'***, a $6.95 trade paperback suitable for readers of all ages, is scheduled for August 27th release. In the weeks leading up to the debut of this new Gon volume, DC's Paradox Press is reissuing the original four volumes of Gon adventures, offering new fans a chance to become Gon-ers, too...

They're Creepy & They're Kooky–Wait a Minute, That's the Wrong Song!...

Remember Herman and Lily and Grandpa and the rest of the ***Munsters,*** the famous Universal-monster inspired family whose misadventures have entertained viewers for decades? (Contrary to popular belief, they were *not* an ***Addams Family*** ripoff—the two series both debuted in September '64 and both ended in September '66, proving that there might be something to that synchronicity thing...) Well, they're back—not on television, but in comic books. ***The Munsters,*** the premiere offering from TV Comics, features new comic book adventures of the residents of 1313 Mockingbird Lane, along with articles about Munsters collectibles, interviews with members of the cast, and more. The $2.95 first issue, which features a photo cover from the original series (forget that lackluster remake from a few years ago), is slated for August release; a variant edition, aimed at Munster die-hards, is available for $7.95.


MAGNUS MEETS HIS MAKER?
MAGNUS ROBOT FIGHTER
MRF
VERSUS
SOLAR
MAN OF THE ATOM
PEYER • BOLLER • PEPOY
MAGNUS ROBOT FIGHTER#7
ON SALE IN JULY
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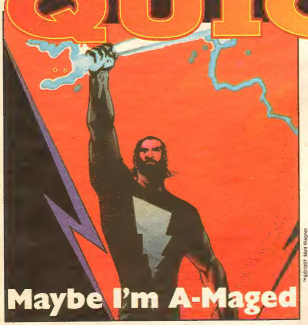
QUICKSHOTS



Maybe I'm A-Maged

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It's been more than ten years since Kevin Matchstick's first adventure wrapped up in the pages of the original Mage series—but Kevin's heroic exploits are far from over, as comic book readers are about to discover. ***Mage: The Hero Defined,*** a new series debuting from Image Comics, reintroduces readers to the baseball-bat-wielding hero who seems to have inherited the powers of the legendary King Arthur... although his sword has been replaced with Kevin's aforementioned Louisville slugger.

As the series opens, Kevin and his partner, Joe, deal with three deadly harpies when something unsuspecting shows up. As their crusade progresses, they re joined by other mystical warriors, all of whom seem—like Kevin— to wield the powers of legendary heroes from the past. But our hero can't spend too much time trying to figure out what's bringing these heroes together in our world; he's too busy searching for the second Mage, the one who will help him to fulfill his ultimate destiny... whatever that destiny might be.

Mage: The Hero Defined is the long-awaited follow-up to one of the most acclaimed series of the 1980's. It is both written and illustrated by *Mage* creator *Matt Wagner*, whose most recent work as writer/artist was the acclaimed ***Batman/Grendel*** crossover series. ***Mage: The Hero Defined #1,*** a $2.50 comic, is scheduled for July release.

Searching for Soulsearchers Sole Founder

Think you know who founded Soulsearchers? Of course you do—it's Arnold Q. Stanley, the man trapped in the body of a prairie dog, right?

Think again!

In ***Soulsearchers #24,*** readers learned that there might be more to the origin than everyone first thought. And in ***Soulsearchers #25,*** *Peter David* reveals the truth behind the group's founding—as well as the fate of the Soulsearcher's greatest enemy, Willem Haggard. "This story should settle quite a lot of dangling questions for long-term readers in a very exciting way," editor/artist *Richard Howell* said. Find out the whole story in August, when ***Soulsearchers #25,*** a $2.50 comic, is scheduled for release.

Tarzan's All-Star Adventure

Remember the old film ***Tarzan's New York Adventure?*** Well, *Lovern Kindzierski* is taking the lord of the jungle back to the big city in ***Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan: The Modern Prometheus***—but the challenges he faces in this new two-issue limited series will make that New York Adventure seem like a picnic in the veldt!

As the series begins, The New York City scientific community is in an uproar, fighting for control of the recently-discovered notebooks of Dr. Victor von Frankenstein—notebooks that may hold the secret to life itself! It's not Tarzan's concern, though... until a hulking monstrous figure appears, determined to stop anyone from using the information in those notebooks to create new life.

Tarzan: The Modern Prometheus not only co-stars the legendary Frankenstein monster, it also features some pretty well-known real-life historical figures, such as *Thomas Edison*, *Nikola Tesla*, and *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, who all play a part in the quest for the most important journals in scientific history. ***Tarzan: The Modern Prometheus #1,*** written by *Lovern Kindzierski* and illustrated by *Stan Manoukian* and *Vince Roucher*, features stunning cover art by *Michael Wm. Kaluta*; look for the $2.95 comic on August 6th.

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The United States of A-Mary-ca

Mary Malone, aka Bloody Mary, has waged her own war across near-future Europe in the pages of the first Bloody Mary miniseries. When she returns Stateside, that doesn't mean that she's on vacation, though; actually, she's returning to the US to carry out her latest job—and as you might expect, it's a job that requires plenty of killing and incredible risks.

Bloody Mary: Lady Liberty, a new miniseries from the ***Bloody Mary*** creative team of *Garth Ennis* and *Carlos Ezquerra*, brings Mary to Manhattan Island not as a visitor, but as a liberator. The island has been taken over by the forces of fundamentalist Almighty Branch Achillian leader Reverend Achilles Seagal, and the only way the government can regain control of Manhattan is to eliminate the leader of this force of a half-million. Mary won't go this one alone, though: she's joined by the one-man fighting force known as the Major... and he'd be pretty helpful if he weren't insane! The only thing working in Mary's favor is that Achilles Seagal is pretty preoccupied with his own master plan: he intends to father 144,000 children before Armageddon gets here. Find out who has a better time—Bloody Mary, the Major, or Reverend Seagal— as the story begins in ***Bloody Mary: Lady Liberty #1,*** a $2.50 comic scheduled for July 23rd release.

Doctor Tomorrow Ventures into Wally-World

©2001 Steven Grant

The first three issues of Acclaim's ***Doctor Tomorrow*** have chronicled the hero's adventures during World War II; Doctor Tomorrow moves readers ahead a decade, though, focusing on Doc's disagreements with the notorious "Commie-hunter" Senator Joe McCarthy. Even though Doctor Tomorrow has always fought for American ideals overseas and has acted to thwart Communist activities in the US, "Tailgunner Joe" has decided that the hero is in reality a Communist sympathizer, and he's going to do whatever it takes to learn the good doctor's secrets and shut him down forever... even if that means taking the life of the man who has risked his life again and again for the safety of his world.

Doctor Tomorrow #4, written by *Rob Layton*, features the art of *Jim Hall* and *Ralph Reese*, who use their talents to pay homage to the arts of the late, great *Wally Wood*; a text page in this issue looks at Wood's career and his contributions to the comics field. ***Doctor Tomorrow #4,*** a $2.50 comic, is scheduled for August release.

You'll Be Crazy About This Book

'Much madness is divinest sense," the poet *Emily Dickinson* once said... but the chemist known simply as Menz isn't sure whether he should agree with her or not. His scientific background leads him to gather more evidence before he draws a conclusion—but he also has to deal with the fact that he is undeniably insane and there doesn't seem to be very much sense at all in the strange place in which he finds himself.

Menz Insana, a Vertigo one-shot written by British novelist *Christopher Fowler* and fully painted by award-winning artist *John Bolton*, takes readers into Menz' mind, offering them a tour of the "mental plane" that serves as his new home. Along with Menz, they'll meet such residents as the arrogant Cowhead, Betty the Deep-Fried Rabbit, and the Squid Baby, as well as Menz' lover/travelling companion Jaz, a lovely, seductive woman whose attraction to Menz seems just a wee bit—shall we say?—incomprehensible. But then again, this isn't reality, is it?

Meanwhile, Menz has a couple of questions that he may not be able to find answers for. First, what's happening to his body while his mind wanders about in this strange world of lunacy? And what was it that made him go mad in the first place?

The answers to these questions can be found in ***Menz Insana,*** a 64-page prestige-format one-shot priced at $7.95; look for it on July 30th.

CS GAMING NEWS

-- If you thought that summer was hot where you live, then you aren't quite ready for this game. ***Dune: Eye of the Storm*** is the new collectible card game from Alderac Publishing, based on the best selling series of novels by Frank Herbert. The game combines the political machinations of the books with the all-out action of interstellar war, all set against the backdrop of Arakis, one of the most distinct worlds ever created for fiction. Each player assumes the role of a head of one of the minor houses, and then fights his way up the ladder to earn a seat on the Landsraad High Council. Once there, you have the power to shape the future of the Imperium, not to mention win the game. Each starter deck will contain sixty cards, with the boosters containing fifteen cards each. The starters will retail for $7.95 each, and the boosters will retail for $2.99 each. You can look for ***Dune: Eye of the Storm*** to hit shelves this July.

-- Speaking of CCGs, the new ***Magic: The Gathering*** expansion scheduled to ship this fall is the latest standalone expansion in the series. It will be called ***Tempest***, and it will continue the story that was begun with ***Weatherlight***. Oh, and this will also be the first new expansion designed by ***Magic*** creator Richard Garfield since ***Arabian Nights***...

And while we're talking about Wizards of the Coast, the sale of TSR has gone through, and ***Advanced Dungeons and Dragons*** and all other titles formerly published by TSR should be coming out from its new publisher very soon. Don't look for everything to suddenly appear in the next week or so—it does take a little while to get products into production, to get them shipped to warehouses, etc.—but within the next few weeks, you should begin seeing TSR products in stores again. No word yet as to how upcoming products will be marketed: will they be TSR, TSR/WotC, WotC, or something entirely different?

-- With the summer blockbuster ***Men in Black*** about to hit screens everywhere across the country, it seems like a good time to release the game. ***Men In Black*** is the newest edition to the ***MasterBook*** series from West End. ***MasterBook*** is the generic game system that lets you play any number of games using one simple set of rules. This latest edition lets you assume the role of one of the identity free heroes that are fighting to save the Earth from the scum of the universe. This game comes with all of the information that you need to begin playing in this comic inspired universe, including information on the setting, the aliens, and of course, all of the fabulous technology. ***Men In Black*** should be out in July, just in time to catch all of the publicity from this sure-to-be-a-hit movie.

-- The newest expansion for the ***Paranoia*** game is finally on schedule from West End, and it's a real monster. ***Creatures of the Nightcycle*** is the new ninety-six page expansion that includes the dark side of Alpha Complex. Clones the have been turned into vampires, crunched into nickels, and much more all await your player with big, nasty teeth—and they might not make it out alive. This new expansion/adventure is about changing your players into something that they might not want to be, and this is the first time that their precious bodily fluids are at risk, as they face becoming Super-Processed Almost Meat. ***Creature of the Nightcycle*** is scheduled to ship in July for the suggested retail price of $15.00.

-- It's official. The properties of Mayfair Games have been acquired by ICE. This means that you will be seeing some of your favorite games, like ***Empire Builder*** and ***Settlers of Catan***, coming out under the Iron Crown logo later this year.

-- There is some armored anime-style action about to head your way. ***Armored Trooper Votoms*** is the new role-playing game from R. Talsorian that continues the tradition that was begun with the release of ***Bubblegum Crisis***. ***Armored Trooper Votoms*** uses the same Fuzion system of gaming that was introduced in ***Bubblegum Crisis***, but don't worry, everything that you need to play is included in this one book. A complete role-playing system, and tons of background information based on the hit anime series. Much of the information in this book is translated into english for the first time ever. You can begin playing in this universe of intrigue, mercenaries, and all-out combat immediately if you are already familiar with the Fuzion system, and in only a few minutes if you aren't, thanks to the simple, easy-to-learn rules. The adventure of the Astrogius galaxy awaits, and all you have to do is start playing. ***Armored Trooper Votoms*** is scheduled to be released this July for the suggested retail price of $25.00.

-- The Year of the Ally continues from White Wolf this summer, with the release of ***Liege, Lord and Lackey***. This new sourcebook details the life of your vampire's entourage in the world of ***Vampire: The Dark Ages***. This book includes all of the information that you need to construct a mortal character in this dark Medieval world, allowing you to play a mortal in a world where life is particularly fragile. Not only that, but this is also the reference for relations between Vampires, their lackeys, and others in this world, with special sections on the Numina from a ***Dark Ages*** perspective. ***Liege, Lord and Lackey*** is scheduled to ship this July for the suggested retail price of $15.00.

The new ***Aeon*** science-fiction game system has been scheduled. The new game will be out this November, so keep your eyes open for this great new game.

-- There are few games that are as hot as the ***Star Wars Collectible Card Game***, and the temperature just seems to go up. ***Star Wars: Cloud City*** is the newest expansion for the hit CCG adding all new heights of excitement for the game. This new set introduces Lando Calrissian, Cloud City Cars, Carbon Freezing Units, Ugnaughts, and Leboth, plus a whole lot more. In addition, the idea of lightsaber battles is explored, and the first battle between Luke and Vader is introduced—and Luke discovers his true heritage. ***Star Wars: Cloud City Expansion*** will come packaged nine cards to a pack, with sixty packs in a display. The expansion will be out in July for the suggested retail price of $2.50 a pack.

-- The secrets of the Theran Empire are revealed at last in the newest expansion for the ***Earthdawn*** role-playing game from Fasa. ***The Theran Empire Sourcebook*** includes extensive information on everything from the island of Thera through its five primary provinces. Everything from arts, sciences, magicians, legions, and the cruel rulers that oversee the whole thing. You will also find a section the details the people of the empire, letting you know what the typical day in the life of a very atypical soul is like. ***The Theran Empire Sourcebook*** will be out in July for the suggested retail price of $20.00.

-- According to more than one source, it appears that Fleer has added the Image heroes to its ***OverPower*** superhero CCG line: while the cards won't appear until later this year or early next year, a sneak preview card should be featured in an upcoming issue of ***Combo*** magazine. This means that fans will soon have the opportunity to pit their favorite Marvel, DC, and Image characters in battle with one another—something that a lot of superhero fans & gamers never thought they'd see.

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CSN SPOTLIGHT

Before the Golden Age~the Jazz Age & Elseworld's Finest

Bruce Wayne and Clark Kent—one a normal human who relies on his skills and intellect, the other a being with powers and abilities far beyond those of normal men. That much sounds like the Bruce Wayne and Clark Kent that we've all become very familiar with—but there are a few *minor* differences...

For one thing, this Bruce Wayne has a problem with bats—he's scared of them! And this Clark Kent has no idea where his powers came from. But one thing remains the same: these two are destined to become allies in order to do battle with a villain who threatens their world. But it's not the world that DC fans have become familiar with; instead, it's the world of the 1920s, the time of the Jazz Age—and the time of the mysterious League of Assassins, its leader Ra's al Ghul, and the Russian inventor Alexi Luthor.

Elseworlds Finest, a two-issue limited series written by John Francis Moore and illustrated by Kieron Dwyer and Hilary Barta, introduces readers to a new interpretation of a classic team. While certain elements remain the same—Clark is still a reporter, Bruce is still a millionaire haunted by the death of his parents—other elements are remarkably different. This Clark is naive and unsure of his abilities; this Bruce is an expatriate mercenary, an adventurer who travels the world in an adventurous quest.

The adventure begins with Professor Thaddeus Lang discovers the legendary city of Argos—a discovery that leads to his kidnapping by the League of Assassins. Lang's daughter Lana calls on Bruce Wayne to find her father and save him, while Clark Kent follows to get the story of the year. Soon, though, the two men learn that there's a lot more to this scheme involving Ra's al Ghul and Alexi Luthor than they suspected at first—and they learn a great deal more about themselves. But what they learn about the mysterious artifact known as the Godstone—and its effects on Clark Kent—may be the most amazing discovery of all!

Elseworlds Finest #1, a 48-page prestige-format comic priced at $4.95, is scheduled for August 6th release; the second issue in the series follows on September 4th.

by ALEX KIRKLAND

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MARVEL

This September from the House of Ideas!

september highlights

September 17

X-MEN #69

It's the conclusion to Operation: Zero Tolerance and mutantkind will never be the same! The X-Men are on the run and Bastion is closing in for the kill. If he succeeds, Professor X's dream will never come true! This blockbuster operation is performed by the team supreme of Scott Lobdell, Carlos Pacheco and Art Thibert.

September 24

QUICKSILVER #1

Left alone to raise his daughter Luna, Quicksilver will do anything to keep her safe. But when they're caught in a war between Exodus and the High Evolutionary, there's only one thing to do– think fast! This book screams out of the starting gate, propelled by Tom Peyer (MARVEL TEAM-UP), Casey Jones, Rob Haynes and Jason Martin (CABLE & X-FORCE '97).

September 24

NEW MUTANTS #1 (OF 3)

Before X-Force, there were the New Mutants! Now they're reunited by their ex-teammate Magik. There's only one catch– Magik's supposed to be dead! A class reunion of epic proportions is chaperoned by Ben Raab (EXCALIBUR) and Bernard Chang (DAREDEVIL/ DEADPOOL '97).

STAR TREK: TELEPATHY WAR #1

The battle between the Federation and the Dominion is coming to a head! With the crews of the U.S.S. Enterprise and DS9 plus the Starfleet Academy's Omega Squad joining forces, this one has it all! Mind you, this is the one to read from Chris Cooper (STARFLEET ACADEMY) and Patrick Zircher (EARLY VOYAGES).

September 24

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